

Building Blocks

Regulations, best practices, and helpful hints about:
Staffing, Ratios, Group Size, and Training

Chapters

Chapter 11

*Staff Pattern and
Qualifications (WAC 388-
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Chapter 11. WAC 388-150-180

Staff Pattern and Qualifications

Staff Roles

There are many jobs to do in a child care center. The director needs to set clear responsibilities for all staff so they can do their jobs. Following are descriptions of the different roles in a center, and the qualifications required of staff to fill those roles. Although each role appears separately, centers may divide responsibilities among qualified personnel in a variety of ways. For example, it is possible that:

- Staff members may be able to fill more than one role, if they are qualified and the responsibilities do not interfere with one another. For example, the program supervisor may also be the lead provider for one of the groups during some portion of the day. As another example, lead providers may assist at some point cleaning up the building or helping out in the office.
- More than one person may fill a single role. Larger centers may hire lead staff for every group where each person qualifies to act as program supervisor for their portion of the program.

Good programs need qualified staff and able leaders. As you read through the lists of job responsibilities in this chapter, ask yourself: Is someone in our center doing these jobs?

Director

Staff tend to focus on the children, as well they should. But a center is also:

- A business.
- A service for which parents contract.
- Responsible to comply with minimum licensing standards and other regulations.

Someone must be aware of the “big picture,” taking care of management details in a timely and professional manner. Staff need someone they can count on for support or to settle disagreements. Parents need someone who can answer their questions or concerns about the program. Outside parties, including licensors, need someone who is officially responsible for center operations.

Here are some of the major responsibilities of a center director:

- Be a spokesperson for the center’s philosophy and goals.
- Interview, hire, and orient staff.
- Talk to visitors, prospective clients, and parents concerned about center policies and practices.
- Meet with licensors and other officials, and correct any deficiencies.
- Inspect the indoor and outdoor environment for health and safety problems.
- Run staff meetings.

- Handle disputes.
- Oversee staff evaluations, including agreed-upon steps for rectifying shortcomings. Dismiss employees not meeting their job responsibilities.
- Serve as the “health advocate” for staff, seeing that health concerns are given proper attention in the program, and consulting with health professionals about areas of uncertainty or concern.
- Negotiate contracts.
- Schedule and host parent meetings.

There are also many “minor” management duties which only seem minor because someone is doing such a good job of taking care of them. For example, someone needs to:

- Pay the staff.
- See to repairs.
- Buy supplies, order equipment, and pay bills.
- Get out newsletters on time (and probably write a good portion of them!)
- Advertise.
- Duplicate materials for staff.
- Bill parents and record their payments.
- Schedule fire drills.
- Prepare snack and meal menus.
- See that children’s records are current and complete.
- Make social security and worker’s compensation deposits; distribute staff W-4 forms.
- Review the health care plan.
- Apply for renewal of the center’s license.

Obviously, the director can and should delegate some of these responsibilities to others. The director can share some of these duties with the program supervisor. Support staff, such as a secretary, office manager, accountant, or food service person, can manage some. Other staff or parent volunteers can also help. It is ultimately the director’s responsibility, however, to see that all these jobs are done and done well.



Often a provider in a small center tries to do it all; that is, to be director, program supervisor, and a primary care giver for children. As we hope this chapter shows, such a plan is often unrealistic. It is difficult to run a quality program with only one qualified person to fill all roles. What happens if you get sick or have a death in the family? Who can substitute for you?

Parents or an office secretary or administrative assistant can help out with some of the paperwork, answering phones, buying supplies, etc., but that still leaves many duties that only the director or program supervisor can fulfill. Be realistic. Don't stretch yourself too thin. If you do, you will not be able to enjoy the children or offer the quality of care you want to give.

The director chooses which business and child care functions to delegate to support personnel or the program supervisor. There are some education and experience requirements for the director position. Unless the director also meets the requirement for a program supervisor, the person shall have had two years experience working with children and completion of one three-credit college level course in early childhood education, or the equivalent. Persons submitting credentials for director positions must document that they have the background and leadership skills to run a child care business. Licensors will expect job descriptions of other staff to cover duties which the director is not qualified to perform.

Program Supervisor

Someone on staff has to be more than a good business manager. The staff person filling the program supervisor's job must have a solid working knowledge of developmentally and culturally appropriate practices for the children in care. This person will be a model for the rest of the staff in how to organize activities and how to relate positively to children. While education and reading about quality child care are important, they cannot substitute for actual experience providing care for children.

Unless each lead provider has the education and experience to supervise their own portion of the program, the program supervisor must have adequate duty time not caring for children. Even with highly qualified staff caring for children in each room, one staff member must carry the official program supervisor title. This person must submit their credentials to the licensor and is responsible for overall program quality. The program supervisor must be on the premises at least twenty hours per week, except in school age child care programs where the minimum is ten hours.



It makes no sense in a smaller center to keep the person most qualified to provide quality care namely, the program supervisor out of the classroom. Often program supervisors are most effective when they are working with the children:

- *Modeling skills for the other providers.*
- *Communicating with families.*
- *Guiding daily implementation of the program.*

If there is only one person meeting program supervisor qualifications, they need to reserve time to drop out from providing care to fulfill program supervisor duties. This is especially important when some staff are providing care in parts of the center beyond the program supervisor's hearing and sight. The program supervisor is responsible for:

- Supervising the layout of the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Selecting furniture, play materials, and other supplies to meet the developmental and cultural needs of each group of children in the center.
- Seeing staff receive training in communication skills, techniques of behavior management, and information on how to do their particular job.



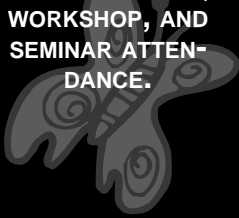
- Supervising the staff's team development of monthly themes and daily planned activities and seeing that staff carry out planned activities.
- Creating a workable record keeping and filing system for activity program plans, and seeing that staff uses it.
- Making sure staff prepare activities in advance so all necessary supplies are available and ready for the children to use.
- Monitoring staff performance.
- Giving feedback or extra training on consistency of ground rules, quality of activities, communication, or conflict management skills.
- Being an answer person for the staff on how to meet the needs of particular children.
- Determining what additional training is appropriate for the different persons on staff. Being aware of training opportunities in the community, encouraging staff attendance, and scheduling on-site training sessions.
- Generally, seeing that the center is a stimulating, developmentally appropriate place for children.
- Training and supervising staff persons.

Training Required of the Program Supervisor

DSHS will accept any of the following as fulfilling the training requirements for program supervisor:

- A graduate or four-year degree in child development, early childhood education, or elementary education.
- A two-year degree or certificate of proficiency in early childhood education.
- Community College credits in early childhood education:
 - forty-five (45) for a center 25 or larger
 - twenty five (25) for a center 13 thru 24
 - ten (10) for a center 12 or less

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PERSON DESIRING THE ROLE OF PROGRAM SUPERVISOR TO DOCUMENT HOURS AND TOPICS OF CONFERENCE, WORKSHOP, AND SEMINAR ATTENDANCE.



- Vocational college clock hours in early childhood education. (One credit generally equals 10 clock hours)
- A Child Development Associate credential (CDA) through the National Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. (For more information about this national assessment and credentialing program, see the Resource section at end of this guidebook.)

The 45-credit requirement for the program supervisor need not all come from college courses. Workshop and conference attendance and pre-approved time spent interning under a qualified program supervisor also count. The limits on credits allowed from any one type of training are:

- * At least thirteen (13) of the 45 credits must be in early childhood education courses (see list below), and from an accredited, post secondary institution.
- * As many as sixteen (16) of the 45 credits can come from documented clock-hours of attendance at workshops, conferences, etc. It takes ten (10) clock-hours to equal one credit-hour. Therefore, 160 clock-hours can apply to the program supervisor training requirement.
- * In child care programs caring exclusively for school age children, to qualify for the program supervisor position, the person will need to have completed:
 - * thirty or more college credit hours in early childhood education or
 - * equivalent work in such courses as recreation, physical education, music, art, education, home economics, psychology, or
 - * social services.

It is the responsibility of the person desiring the role of program supervisor to document hours and topics of conference, workshop, and seminar attendance. They must also give to the licensor transcript copies of courses they take at educational institutions.

Training sessions required for employment such as first aid, CPR, and AIDS/HIV certification or attendance at center orientation sessions do not count toward the credit hours requirement.

- * As many as sixteen (16) of the 45 credits can come from a supervised internship in an educational facility, working under a qualified program supervisor. The licensor must, however, approve in advance the internship. Each quarter of internship equals one credit.



Sometimes a center wishes to hire a program supervisor who does not meet all requirements but is close to completing the necessary course work or experience to meet them. Under some circumstances, DSHS may grant a waiver if the center applies for one. The waiver request should include a plan of completion, outlining:

- *The applicant's current qualifications and background.*
- *The plans to fulfill the education requirements.*
- *A projected time of completion.*

If the program supervisor fails to satisfy the full training requirements within a reasonable amount of time, the department will revoke the waiver. (Remember that waivers only apply during the current licensing period.)

Often persons who have not earned a degree in early childhood education, child development, or elementary education have taken extensive relevant course work. College course work, in-service training, and workshops for meeting early childhood education requirements must be on topics directly related to caring for young children. Examples are:

- Growth and development of children, both typical and atypical.
- Curriculum models.
- Teaching strategies.
- Activities and practices appropriate for different age groups either as a general topic, or in a particular subject area such as language experiences, art, music, science, movement activities, etc.
- Guidance of children, behavior management, communication strategies, conflict resolution.
- Planning, implementing, and evaluating activities.
- Observation skills for screening and assessment.
- Working with special needs children.
- Caring for infants.
- Multicultural activities, recognizing and combating bias.
- State licensing regulations.
- "How to" courses on implementing a particular program model or curriculum.
- Social services and community resources related to children.
- Things to consider in designing spaces for children.
- Safety and hygiene issues, emergency procedures.
- Nutrition issues, cooking activities for children.
- Working together as a staff, group decision making and leadership, conflict resolution.
- Working with families.
- Working with volunteers.
- Ethical and legal issues in early childhood education.
- History, philosophy, psychology, and sociology courses dealing with early childhood education.
- Management courses about treating your child care center as a business, or directing staff.

**YOUR LICENSOR,
RESOURCE AND
REFERRAL, AND
LOCAL CHILD CARE
PROVIDER
ASSOCIATIONS ARE
THE BEST SOURCES
FOR LEARNING WHAT
TRAINING OPPORTUNI-
TIES ARE AVAILABLE IN
YOUR AREA.**



These topics are also suitable for staff in-service training (see Chapter 13). To satisfy early childhood education requirements training must be presented by a recognized educational institution or professional.

Sources of Early Childhood/Child Development Training

- College or vocational institute courses.
- Workshops or conferences sponsored by WAEYC, your local early childhood education association, Resource and Referral, OSPI food program, etc.
- Staff meetings with an invited speaker or use of commercially available training materials.
- Consultants.
- Approved televised courses on child development, parenting, or early childhood education.
- Other on or off-site training opportunities.

Your licensor, Resource and Referral, and local child care provider associations are the best sources for learning what training opportunities are available in your area.

Participants must document attendance at training. Most workshops give certificates of completion, or you can ask the workshop presenter to sign and date the program at the end of the session. You can also obtain college credits for selected televised training series.

Lead Providers

The care children receive on a day-to-day basis is in the hands of your lead staff. You will want people in these positions who are mature enough and responsible enough to provide care of which you can be proud.

Lead staff must be at least 18 years old and have stayed in school at least through high school. Proof of education is a high school diploma or its GED equivalent.

If applicants have not completed high school, they must have a background showing they can run a developmentally appropriate program. This would include:

- (1) Child development experience, meaning at least one year's experience working in a licensed child care center or home; AND
- (2) Child development knowledge, meaning they have completed at least one early childhood education class or its equivalent (30 clock-hours of child-care related workshops).

Obviously, these are minimal requirements for someone who will be the primary care giver for children in your center. There is no better place to invest your time and money than in searching for highly qualified staff and paying them what they are worth.



Don't overlook the need for qualified and available substitutes. Providers will need replacements for sick days, vacations, workshops, etc. Possible sources are:

- *A pool of qualified substitutes or parents you have used in the past, so they are familiar with your program.*
- *Qualified staff members who work other parts of the day and are willing to work extra hours.*
- *An extra staff person who has been used as a “floater,” helping out in the room where they are needed most.*
- *The program supervisor or the director.*
- *Office personnel qualified to switch roles when necessary.*

Let parents know how the program supervisor and lead providers coordinate with assistants and volunteers in caring for their children. Parents may be concerned their children are not getting the services of your “best” staff if they only see children with support personnel.



Keeping the faces consistent is just as important as maintaining small groups and low staff-child ratios. That means assigning specific providers to specific groups, and keeping to a minimum the number of providers rotated through a group during the day.

Assistants, Volunteers, and Support Personnel

All persons working with children in the center must be at least 16 years old. They must be 18 if, at any time during the day, they are responsible for a group of children.

All persons at the center who have regular or unsupervised access to the children, whether paid or volunteer, must:

- * Receive an orientation to the center’s program.
- * Have a criminal history and background inquiry check.
- * Complete a tuberculosis test.
- * Complete HIV/AIDS training.

Assistants must also have a job application form on file. First aid and CPR training are necessary if the assistant or volunteer is ever assigned sole responsibility for a group of children.

Assistants

By definition, an assistant's job is to support the lead provider, not to be in charge. There may be times, however, when the assistant takes responsibility for a group of children while the lead provider is briefly out of the room. For example, the lead provider may need to answer a phone call, use the rest room, or take a scheduled 15-minute break. An assistant or volunteer may not be in charge of the group more than 15 minutes. Also, an assistant or volunteer must be 18 years of age or older if left in charge of a group. The program supervisor or director may need to step into the room if the lead teacher is away longer.

Volunteers Working with the Children

Volunteers working with children can be part of the staff-child ratio if the volunteer meets position qualifications.



You should be cautious in counting on volunteers to meet your staff-child ratios, since volunteers may not show up as faithfully as staff, or may quit unexpectedly.

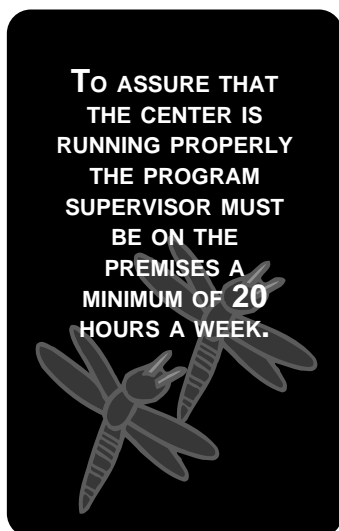
You may be able to find people in your community with special areas of expertise who volunteer to drop by your center on a part-time basis and enrich your program. For example, they may be able to provide enrichment activities such as dance, art, music, movement, languages, or science.

Volunteers who can add to your program can be found in various places. For example:

- You may find a high school or college student or a retired person who is willing to donate their time in exchange for experience working with children.
- Some of your parents may wish to donate their time and expertise or to work in exchange for a reduced tuition fee.
- Local museums, parks, theaters, dance companies, etc., may have persons willing to donate time to work with your children.



For that matter, you may even be able to pay someone to enrich your program offerings. Specialty classes can be a selling point with prospective parents.



Support (non-child care) Personnel

There are a multitude of tasks besides tending to children to do in a child care center. There are snacks to prepare, floors to sweep, materials to duplicate, bathrooms to clean, ledgers to update, equipment to sanitize, and phone calls to return. The director and program supervisor must either:

- Do all these non-care providing tasks themselves.
- Hire sufficient child care staff and arrange schedules and job duties so staff are free from child care responsibilities to tend to non-care functions.
- Rely upon paid or volunteer clerical, cleaning, and cooking staff to take care of some of these functions.

Staff-child ratios include only those staff actually providing care at any given time.

Who's in Charge?

The persons in charge of running the center and the program, the director or program supervisor, must be on site most of the time the center is open, because:

- (1) Staff need answers to questions and supervision throughout the day.
- (2) Parents may have questions only the director or program supervisor can answer. Parents often wish to speak to the director when they drop off or pick up their child. Parents also want to know that persons whose expertise they most trust are present and supervising program quality.
- (3) The children deserve continuity, stability, and quality care.

To assure that the center is running properly:

- * The program supervisor must be on the premises a minimum of 20 hours a week.
- * Either the director or the program supervisor must be on the premises during the time a majority of the children are present. Examples of times when their presence may not be as essential are children's early arrival or late departure times or portions of nap time.
- * The hours when the director and program supervisor are present must appear on the staff duty poster for parents to see.
- * The person in charge of the center when neither the director nor the program supervisor is present must have the qualifications of a lead provider or better.
- * Aides or volunteers cannot be in charge of the center, even on a temporary basis, unless they have the qualifications of a lead provider or better.

Whoever is in charge of the center during a certain portion of the day must be on the premises and available except for an occasional temporary absence. "Temporary" means:

- Of short duration no more than fifteen minutes.
- Not on a regularly scheduled basis.

If the person in charge needs to leave and is unsure when they will return, they must designate another qualified staff member to be in charge. The director must make clear to staff and parents who is in charge of the center at all times.

If for some reason both the director and program supervisor are not on site, a competent person must be in charge until they return. This person should be free of other responsibilities to oversee the center. It is poor practice for both the director and program supervisor to be away at the same time.

Chapter 12. WAC 388-150-190

Group Size and Staff-Child Ratios

Research indicates one consistent measure of quality child care is a staff-child ratio which allows for individual attention. A low staff-child ratio means that there are enough adults ready to be responsive to the children's needs. Keeping the child-staff ratio low means you can create a sense of belonging for the children. If there are enough staff, there will be fewer restrictions on children, less noise and tension, and you'll find children more responsive and cooperative.

It is not just the staff-child ratio which contributes to quality child care, however. Research also shows small group size is very important. When children are in smaller groups, there is usually less noise and more cooperation. Children have fewer distractions,



and adults have more opportunities to respond to the individual needs of the children. In a small group, children don't have to wait as long for turns, and transitions between activities are much simpler. The licensing standards permit groups to be no larger than twice the staff-child ratio.

Only staff actually providing care are part of the staff-child ratio – An adult being in the room is not sufficient. A cook who is preparing meals or a staff person whose job responsibility at the moment is cleaning the center are not part of the staff-child ratio.

It may be that only two or three children normally arrive during the first half hour the center is open or stay the last half hour. At no time should there only be a single person on site unless a second staff person is “readily available” in an emergency. The safest practice is for that second person to be on the premises, within easy calling distance. If not, a system for rapid emergency response must be in place and part of the Health Care Plan. The designated backup person should be at a known location and close enough to respond to a phone call in five minutes or less.

Infants require a separate care area in centers licensed for 13 or more children. You may not mix infants with children from other age groups. You may briefly combine children of different age groups provided that you maintain the staff-to-child ratio and group size designated for the youngest child in a mixed age group.

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Staff -Child Ratio</u>	<u>Maximum Group Size</u>
1 month through 11 months (infant)	1:4	8
12 months through 29 months (toddler)	1:7	14
30 months through 5 years (preschooler)	1:10	20
5 years and older (school-age child)	1:15	30

Continuous Supervision

Even during rest periods and transition from inside to outside or room- to-room, staff must supervise children. It is advisable to send a staff person with the first children to move to another area. Children cannot leave the grounds unattended or be in a room alone with a closed door, except in a bathroom.

During rest time, a staff person may be filling out daily reports, making materials, or cleaning up. This must occur so that they can still see and hear resting children.

Staff can adequately supervise older children without making them feel under pressure. Children in a group are hungry for small opportunities for privacy. Allowing children chances to be momentarily “out of the spotlight” is not only okay, it is advisable. It is acceptable to give children some freedom in their care room or on the playground, such as:

- Reading corners blocked off from the rest of the room by secure dividers.
- Small raised lofts.
- “Forts” behind the bushes on the playground.

Movement by the providers is the key. They must be aware of developments in the total space which children are occupying. When children are in private spaces, providers must:

- Be able to see in if necessary.
- Be able to hear what's going on.
- Look in occasionally.

Chapter 13. WAC 388-150-200

Staff Development and Training

Choosing Your Staff

Where to Look

Get in touch with organizations that can publicize you are hiring and perhaps supply you with the names of people looking for a job. Among the resources you might tap are your local:

- Child care provider organization or other providers whose programs are similar to yours.
- Resource and Referral.
- High school vocational counselors or home economics teachers.
- College or voc-tech early childhood or teacher education programs, or the college's placement office.
- Newspapers or child care newsletters.
- Employment agencies.
- Bulletin boards at the community center, grocery store, laundromat, etc.

Any notice of job opportunities you distribute should give the job title plus some information about job responsibilities (including starting date), qualifications required, and how to contact you.

BUILDING BLOCKS

**APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYEE OR VOLUNTEER SERVICES, LICENSED/CERTIFIED
CHILD CARE AGENCY—DSHS10-A6(X)**

Interviewing

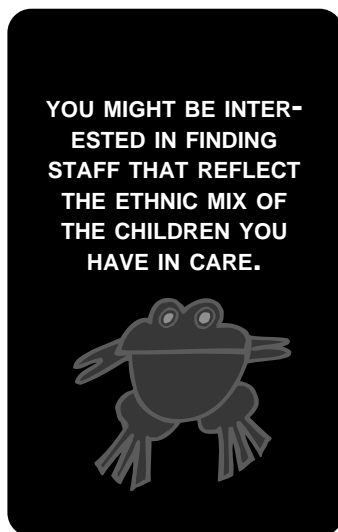
Job applicants must fill out an application form, preferably before the interview. In interviewing for staff, be on the lookout for qualities which do not show up on a resumé. You can train persons on communication skills, expectations for children of different ages or different cultural backgrounds, and job skills. First, however, the person must be comfortable with children and with your center's philosophy.

There are some things you cannot train.

- Concern for and love of children.
- Kindness.
- Respect for others.
- Cheerfulness.
- Warmth.
- Flexibility.
- Stability.
- Enthusiasm and lots of energy

These qualities are important in a person who will be working with children. In addition, staff members must be able to meet the physical challenge of working with children. Finally, you might be interested in finding staff that reflect the ethnic mix of the children you have in care. This is especially important when the group of children is racially and culturally diverse.

In order for you to hire applicants, they must prove that they do not have tuberculosis (see Chapter 15). They must also complete a criminal history and background inquiry that screens for a record of child abuse or crimes against others (see Chapter 35). They must also document that they meet the qualifications for their position.



You cannot depend on the department to do your staff screening for you. It is much more important to:

- *Carefully interview the applicant.*
- *Check references. Often you will learn more by contacting previous employers than you will talking to the professional references listed.*
- *Observe employees in action during the early days of their employment.*
- *Arrange for the applicant to spend a few hours observing staff and children.*

Personnel Policies and Contracts

The best way to avoid misunderstanding and disagreements about job responsibilities, personnel policies, or benefits is to put the terms of employment in writing. Centers with five or more employees must have a written set of personnel policies. All centers must review their policies with employees at the point of hiring. Best practice is to:

- Use the general personnel policy to write a description of the position being filled.
- Review the terms of employment with the new employee, making changes if necessary.
- Use the final document as a contract, to be signed and dated by both parties.

Topics you may want to cover in your personnel policies are:

- A detailed job description.
- Salary and hours.
- Fringe benefits.
- Evaluation procedures.
- Grievance procedures.
- Termination procedures.
- * Non-discrimination.

Possible fringe benefits

- * Social security.
- * Worker's compensation.
- Sick leave, personal leave.
- Paid vacation.
- Professional days.
- Paid time and payment of fees for attending workshops, conferences, early childhood courses, etc.
- Paid maternity or paternity leave.
- Health or dental insurance.
- A retirement plan.

Guidelines for Developing Personnel Policies

REQUIREMENT:

All child care agencies are required to have written personnel policies if they have 5 or more employees (paid or unpaid).

1. ENROLLMENT AND ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A. Include a statement that the agency does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, Vietnam era veteran status, or disability. **Except**, in a child care facility, staff must be at least 16 years of age to work with supervision; and staff must be at least 18 years of age to be left in sole charge of a group of children.
- B. Describe procedure to deal with complaints related to non-discrimination.
- C. For agencies with 15 or more employees(full & part-time), describe how you will meet the following requirements.
 - (1) The agency must be accessible to people with disabilities
 - (2) Post a non-discrimination policy
 - (3) Appoint a coordinator to oversee compliance with Section 504 (related to people with disabilities)
 - (4) Assure that people with who are not fluent in English are not denied services. This would include translation of written information and interpreters.
 - (5) Have an internal complaint procedure to resolve complaints of discrimination
- D. In addition, if a child care agency has more than 50 employees and contracts with DSHS for more than \$50,000, the agency must have a written affirmative action plan in accordance with U.S. Department of Labor guidelines.

2. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- A. If there is a board of directors, describe the relationship of the board to the director and the agency
- B. Describe any authority the board has to hire/terminate the director or any other staff
- C. Include a copy of the Article of Incorporation and by-laws.

3. HIRING PROCEDURE, may include, but may not be limited to the following:

- A. Application
- B. Job Interview(s)
- C. Reference Checks
- D. Copies of transcripts, diplomas, or certificates to verify education
- E. Background and criminal records check completed by the Department of Social and Health Services
- F. Completion of Employment Eligibility Verification (Form I-9) (Required by U.S. Immigration Naturalization Service)

BUILDING BLOCKS

4. **ORIENTATION** which includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - A. Minimum licensing requirements
 - B. Goals and Philosophy of the agency
 - C. Planned daily activities and routines
 - D. Child guidance and behavior management methods
 - E. Child abuse and neglect prevention, detection, and reporting policies and procedures
 - F. Special health and development needs of individual children
 - G. The health care plan
 - H. Fire prevention and safety procedures
 - I. Personnel policies (required in writing with 5 or more employees (paid or unpaid))
5. **EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**, includes, but may not be limited to the following:
 - A. TB test
 - B. Current First Aid Training
 - C. Current CPR training for the ages of children being supervised
 - D. HIV/AIDS Training
 - E. Food Handler's Card, if required
 - F. Current Washington State Driver's License, with appropriate endorsements, if required
 - G. Attend in-service training and staff meetings
 - H. Responsibility to be at work on time and call if the employee is going to be late, ill or otherwise going to be absent
 - I. Statement that employees will act in a professional manner and will treat children with respect and in a developmentally appropriate manner.
 - J. Statement that employees will follow the minimum licensing requirements and the policies and procedures of the agency.
6. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

A statement that information about clients will be maintained in a confidential manner, and will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons unless there is written permission from the parent(s) or guardian.
7. **PROBATIONARY STATUS AND EVALUATION**
 - A. Describe length of probationary status
 - B. Describe evaluation process during probationary period
 - C. Describe evaluation process after the employee becomes permanent.
8. **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**
 - A. Specific job descriptions for each position (paid or unpaid)
 - B. Specific qualifications for each position (paid or unpaid) to include age, education, experience and personal qualities)

BUILDING BLOCKS

9. **HOURS OF WORK AND RATE OF PAY**

- A. Describe hours to be worked, rate of pay (full and/or part-time)
- B. Describe how often salaries are paid
- C. Describe lunch, dinner, and coffee breaks
- D. Describe paid holidays
- E. Describe pay or other compensation for overtime
- F. Describe promotional opportunities and procedure/criteria for pay raises

10. **FRINGE BENEFITS**, may include, but may not be limited to the following:

- A. Paid vacations and sick leave
- B. Parental leave
- C. Maternity/paternity leave
- D. Funeral/bereavement leave
- E. Military Leave
- F. Jury Duty
- G. Paid Training
- H. Reimbursement for Travel
- I. Health Insurance
- J. Disability Insurance
- K. Paid child care as a fringe benefit
- L. Retirement Plan

11. **LEAVE WITHOUT PAY**

Describe under what circumstances, if any, leave without pay may be granted.

12. **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Describe process/procedure when staff have a conflict/problem with a co-worker, supervisor, director, board of directors, or working conditions.

13. **DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

- A. Describe grounds for taking disciplinary action against an employee.
- B. Describe disciplinary action that may be taken.
- C. Describe process, include appeal process, if disciplinary action is taken.

14. **TERMINATION AND RESIGNATION**

- A. Describe grounds for termination or dismissal.
- B. Describe process to provide notice to employee of termination or dismissal.
- C. If termination is due to Reduction in Force, describe options that are available to staff, including reassignment, severance pay or continuation of benefits, if available.
- D. Describe policy/procedure for staff to notify the agency if staff want to resign/terminate employment.



Most child care providers are natural nurturers. It is important that they also be nurtured. You might want to try:

- *Taking a valued staff member out to lunch at a nice cafe every once in a while.*
- *Ordering a take-out or catered meal for a staff meeting.*
- *Giving end-of-the-year staff gifts.*
- *Giving bonuses for special occasions or quality work.*
- *Giving staff members paid well days to spend as they wish, or occasionally letting them go home early.*

A pat on the back is always welcome. A staff person that feels appreciated is a happy worker and a happy staff gives the children better care.



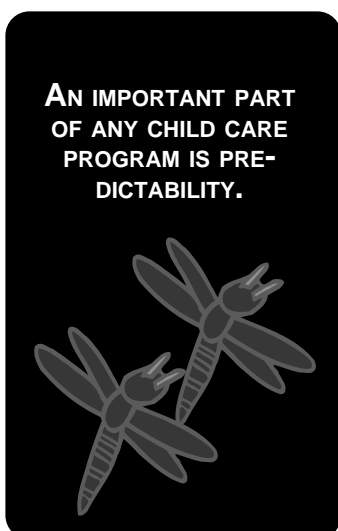
Salaries and fringe benefits can consume 75 percent of a center's budget or more. It is tempting, therefore, to save money by reducing staff salaries and fringe benefits. However, low salaries and poor fringe benefits do not attract and hold highly qualified personnel. When you consider the extra time and energy a center with high turnover spends finding, hiring, and training staff, the "savings" are questionable.

You cannot serve children well by having an ever-changing series of providers who are semi-qualified, poorly trained, unfamiliar with the children, and poorly motivated. If we want parents and the community to treat us as professionals, we must try to offer professional wage and fringe benefit packages.

Familiarizing New Staff with Your Center

An important part of any child care program is predictability. Both adults and children will be more comfortable if they know what happens next. Notices about new staff, introduction of new children, and a good orientation for both adults and children will reduce stress and help your center run smoothly.

Both employees and volunteers must be familiar with your policies, practices, and procedures. Centers must offer an orientation session covering both licensing requirements (health, fire, child abuse, minimum standards) and programmatic issues (goals, scheduling, materials, discipline policy, special needs of particular children). See the list in WAC 388-150-200.





Most new staff need a “shakedown cruise” with the program supervisor or some other designated staff person. They need a chance to see where the supplies are, get to know the children, and have someone model familiar routines for them before they work alone.



Don’t forget the children’s needs. They need to meet the new person and learn what that person will be doing. Most times when a new person is starting an old person is leaving. Children need an opportunity to say goodbye.

Some centers find it valuable to have a staff handbook, which covers all of this material in writing. This is one way to make sure no important details are skipped in the orientation. It also gives staff a way of reviewing policies and procedures later. Some centers ask new employees to sign the staff handbook after they read and understand it, others use an orientation checklist.

Required Training for Staff

First Aid/CPR Training

Best practice is for all staff to have current CPR and first aid training appropriate to the ages of the children in care.

**BEST PRACTICE IS
FOR ALL STAFF TO
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ATE TO THE AGES OF
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CARE.**



BUILDING BLOCKS

ORIENTATION OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

ORIENTATION OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Center policies and procedures orientation is required for all new employees and volunteers within a reasonable period from date of hiring.

See Washington Administrative Code(WAC) 388-150-200.

Employee or volunteer initials and dates each item discussed:

(Indicate N/A if not applicable)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Initial</i>	<i>Item Discussed</i>
_____	_____	1. Personal policies (when employing 5 or more persons.)
_____	_____	A. Job description (copy to each employee/volunteer)
_____	_____	2. Staff/volunteer requirement
_____	_____	A. Chain of command
_____	_____	B. In-service training plan
_____	_____	C. Staff meetings
_____	_____	D. Background inquiry clearance
_____	_____	E. TB test
_____	_____	F. CPR
_____	_____	G. First Aid training
_____	_____	H. HIV/AIDS training
_____	_____	I. Washington state driver's license
_____	_____	J. Food handler's permit
_____	_____	3. Minimum licensing requirements (copy to each employee & volunteer) include:
_____	_____	A. Capacity of center and rooms/areas
_____	_____	B. Required staff to child ratio, age limits & group size
_____	_____	4. Fire protection & prevention procedures
_____	_____	A. Fire evacuation plan
_____	_____	B. How to test smoke detectors
_____	_____	C. How to use fire extinguishers
_____	_____	D. How to conduct inspection of center to identify & correct fire hazards
_____	_____	E. Resetting fire alarm system (only with permission of local Fire Dept.)

BUILDING BLOCKS

ORIENTATION OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| _____ | _____ | 5. Behavior management |
| _____ | _____ | A. Prohibition of spanking & any corporal punishment |
| _____ | _____ | B. Positive discipline techniques |
| _____ | _____ | 6. Prevention, detection & reporting requirements of child abuse, neglect, and exploitation |
| _____ | _____ | A. Reading " Educator's Guide to Child Protective Services " |
| _____ | _____ | 7. Health Care Plan (include): |
| _____ | _____ | A. Steps to take in medical emergency |
| _____ | _____ | B. Steps to take when child becomes ill or is injured at center |
| _____ | _____ | C. Medication Management (include parent permission for prescription medication; storage; disbursement & record keeping) |
| _____ | _____ | D. Location of first aid kit & emergency lighting device (or flashlight) |
| _____ | _____ | E. Handwashing for staff/volunteers & children |
| _____ | _____ | 8. Infant and toddler care |
| _____ | _____ | A. Diaper changing procedures |
| _____ | _____ | B. Feeding |
| _____ | _____ | C. Sanitation of toys & equipment |
| _____ | _____ | D. Toilet training |
| _____ | _____ | E. Use of nurse consultant |
| _____ | _____ | 9. Goals and philosophy |
| _____ | _____ | A. Education philosophy |
| _____ | _____ | B. Policy for developing program/curriculum & ordering equipment |
| _____ | _____ | C. Religious policy |
| _____ | _____ | 10. Planned daily activities & routines |
| _____ | _____ | A. Schedule of activities |
| _____ | _____ | B. Sign-in & sign-out procedures |
| _____ | _____ | C. Food preparation, snacks, & meals |
| _____ | _____ | D. Outdoor play/safety |
| _____ | _____ | E. Naps (children in visual & auditory range) |
| _____ | _____ | F. Clean-up, including dishes/utensils |
| _____ | _____ | G. Opening and closing of the center |

BUILDING BLOCKS
ORIENTATION OF EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | 11. Field trip safety policies |
| _____ | _____ | 12. Transportation safety policies |
| _____ | _____ | 13. Equipment safety (steps to take if equipment needs
repair/replacement) |
| _____ | _____ | 14. Developmental/Health needs/allergies of individual
children |
| _____ | _____ | 15. Communication with parents |
| _____ | _____ | 16. Other (specify)_____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | 17. Other (specify)_____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | 18. Other (specify)_____ |
| | | _____ |

 Signature of Employee or Volunteer

 Date Completed

 Signature & Title of Person Who Gave Orientation

 Date Completed

**IF YOU AND YOUR
STAFF FOLLOW THE
HEALTH AND SAFETY
REGULATIONS IN
WAC, YOU WILL
NOT PUT YOURSELF
AT RISK FOR
GETTING HIV/
AIDS.**



The licensee must maintain copies of the cards at the center. At the very least, you must ensure that a person with current, certified training is present:

- When the first child arrives and the last child leaves.
- With each group of children, inside and outside the center.
- In a center-owned or operated vehicle being used to transport children.
- With children playing in or near water.

You are risking serious legal liability not to mention personal heartache if there is an accident and you did not have properly trained staff supervising the child.

Department-approved first aid training is available from:

- The Red Cross.
- The Department of Labor and Industries.
- Various health offices, fire departments, community colleges, vocational technical institutes, hospitals, and qualified individuals.

Check with your licensor, department of health, or Resource and Referral for a more detailed list of approved training available in your area. Some courses are available in a central location. Others have one of the facilities whose staff is being trained serve as “host.” Some first aid training courses are specific for child care workers. A first aid certificate is usually good for two or three years.

Department-approved CPR training that includes infant/child CPR is available from the above sources, as well as from The American Heart Association (the Department of Labor and Industries training includes pediatric CPR only if you specifically request it). Again, check with your licensor, department of health, or Resource and Referral for a more detailed list of appropriate training available in your area. A CPR certificate is good for one year in some locations, two in others. The duration also depends on the specific course content.

HIV/AIDS Training

Confidentiality Issues

The law does not require parents to notify the center that their child has tested HIV positive. Law forbids the center director to pass along such information to staff members or other parents without written permission from the child’s parents. The law does not require center staff to inform their employer if they have tested HIV positive. As a matter of good practice, parents and staff will usually make this information known, but they may choose otherwise. And finally, many people who are HIV positive do not even know it themselves. Thus, you should treat all blood as potentially infectious.

These rights are in place because there is no medical evidence that persons in a child care center are at risk from associating with someone who has tested positive for HIV/AIDS, as long as staff take normal precautions.

Some Basic Facts About AIDS

- HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) is a virus. This virus may cause an illness called AIDS. This virus cannot spread by normal contact between adults, adults and children, or between children. This includes hugging, kissing, sharing the same dishes, toys, and toilets.
- You cannot get AIDS from being sneezed on, spit at, or bit by an infected person, or from an infant's stool or urine.
- Normal procedure is to use disposable plastic gloves when treating an injury. Or you can use a towel, diaper, piece of clothing, or some other barrier. Always wash your hands after caring for a bleeding wound, even if you wore gloves. These simple measures will protect you from the AIDS virus as well as other illness spread through blood.
- You should do even simple tasks like removing a splinter with proper precautions. You should wash and disinfect the tweezers afterwards.
- Extra care is necessary to clean and disinfect all skin, clothing, and furnishings on which blood has spilled.
- You should teach children to tell a staff member immediately if someone is bleeding and to wash carefully if they come in contact with someone else's blood. You should alert children to tell staff if they find syringes, needles, or "balloons" (condoms).

If you and your staff follow the health and safety regulations in WAC, you will not put yourself at risk for getting HIV/AIDS.

Sources of Approved Training

The AIDS Omnibus Bill of 1988 requires all staff of licensed child day care centers to receive training on HIV/AIDS. This law seeks to reduce misinformation about HIV/AIDS and to promote education regarding infection control procedures.

Approved sources of HIV/AIDS training are under review as the guidebook goes to press. There is a self-study booklet called "HIV/AIDS Information for Those Caring for Young Children," available from the Red Cross. A certificate of completion is available. Also available is a training video with study guide produced by the State Department of Health and the Pierce County Health Department (see Resource list).

Other courses and materials which cover the same basic material are available in your area and will be certified as approved training by the Office of HIV/AIDS in the Department of Health. Check with your licenser, Resource and Referral, your local health department, or the Washington AIDS hotline (1-800-272-AIDS) for up-to-date information. DSHS requires all staff to receive HIV/AIDS training.

Food Handler's Permit

The center must have on file a food handler's permit for any staff participating in the preparation of full meals at the center. To get the permit, staff should:

- Obtain a copy of the State of Washington Food and Beverage Service Worker's Manual, available from your local health department.
- Study the material.
- Take the food handler's test, available at the local health department. The test covers the basics of safe food handling, preparation, and storage.



The possibility of spreading food-borne illness in child care settings is high because of the combination of busy staff who handle food, and young children with poor hygiene habits. We suggest all staff persons who handle food, including those who prepare snacks, study the food handler manual, even if they don't take the test. Best practice is for a minimum of two persons at the center to obtain the permit.

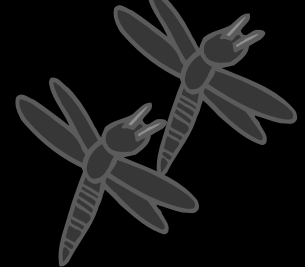
Ongoing Training

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings give everyone a chance to discuss concerns and plan future activities. As in all groups, good communication, caring, and mutual support are the keys to building a successful staff. Regular staff meetings are one way to build a smooth operating team.

How often and who to include in meetings depends on time, space, duties, and of staff size. The less experienced the staff, the more frequent the need for the director and program supervisor to guide and coordinate their efforts. Centers should have at least monthly staff meetings. Some centers alternate full staff meetings with "lead provider" meetings. All centers should have full staff planning meetings at least quarterly.

**LEARN WHAT
TRAINING IS AVAIL-
ABLE IN YOUR
COMMUNITY AND
ENCOURAGE STAFF
TO ATTEND.**



Encouraging Staff to Take Advantage of Ongoing Training Opportunities

Learn what training is available in your community and encourage staff to attend. Look for topics staff members are genuinely interested in and will be able to immediately put to use. Incentives:

- Paid time off.
- Paid workshop fees.
- Arrange for a group to attend the workshop together.
- Bring the trainer to the center and make it part of a regularly scheduled staff meeting.
- Require one outside workshop per year as part of written job description.
- Possibilities of advancement to more responsible, better paid positions in center.

For a suggested list of topics, see the list of early childhood related topics in Chapter 11. The particular topics of value to your staff will depend on their current level of training and areas of interest.

You must provide or arrange at least quarterly ongoing training opportunities and encourage staff to attend. We recommend that attendance be part of their job description or employee contract. You must maintain a written in-service, staff development training program plan. This plan must describe the duration, frequency, and sources of staff training opportunities. You must also document staff attendance.

Staff Evaluations

Evaluations are not a “report card.” As a business person, you are concerned about the quality of care your center provides and would like to see the care improve over time. As an employer, you also want to document concrete steps you take to solve problems prior to making a decision to dismiss an employee.

Evaluations provide a regular time to discuss with your staff progress made and mutually agree upon reasonable standards for continued growth. You should include staff members’ self-selected goals for things they want to accomplish during the coming months. You should also include agreed steps for dealing with shortcomings.